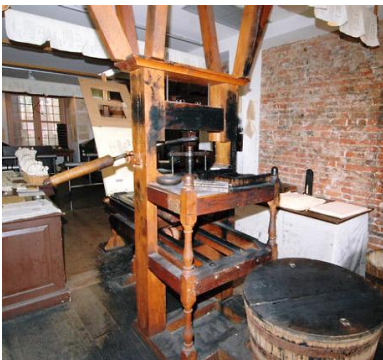


Background Dossier Four

Ben Franklin, Printer and Writer

Here are some facts about Mr. Franklin's life as a printer/writer:

- Began working as an apprentice printer for his brother at age 12
- Wrote letters to The New England Courant under the pseudonym of Silence Dogood at age 16
- Worked in London print shops from 1724-1726
- Opened his own printing company in Philadelphia
- Bought and then printed The Pennsylvania Gazette
- Printed U.S. currency
- Printed 26 editions of Poor Richard's Almanack, in which he printed calendars, dates of fairs, court dates, times of sunrise and sunset, tides, phases of the moon and eclipses, various weather predictions, and sayings about self-improvement. This became the best selling book in the colonies.
- Wrote his autobiography
- Helped with drafting the Declaration of Independence (although Jefferson did most of the writing)
- Wrote many letters, household inventories, and expense ledgers
- Published America's first German newspaper
- Kept a diary on his sea journeys in which he charted the Gulf Stream



Franklin's sayings, or aphorisms, were very popular!

"Fish and visitors stink after three days."

"Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead."